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PLANTING TREES FOR COMMUNITIES



CHECKLISTS FOR SUCCESS

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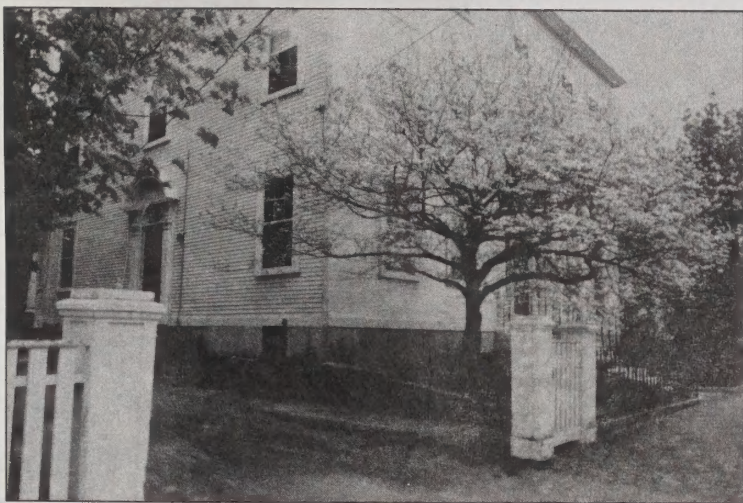


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PLANTING TREES FOR COMMUNITIES

TREES create green spaces in communities. The right trees in the right places benefit you, your home, and your community now and in the future.

Using this publication will help citizens create community green spaces. It encourages both experts and amateurs to plant and grow trees correctly, and to maintain new and older plantings correctly.

Trees growing in small parks and commons, along streets, and in the yards and gardens of neighborhoods provide a mosaic of green landscapes within a community. They provide benefits beyond beauty, such as moderating the effects of heat, sound, air pollution, excess storm water runoff, and soil erosion. Trees also provide living space for wildlife.

Greening and maintaining a community landscape is a long term commitment that depends on PEOPLE!

CHECKLISTS FOR SUCCESS

Six checklists help you select, plant, and care for trees:

CHECKLIST

- 1 Site Selection: where to plant
- 2 Tree Selection: what to plant
- 3,4,5 Planting Correctly
- 6 After-care: long-term maintenance plan

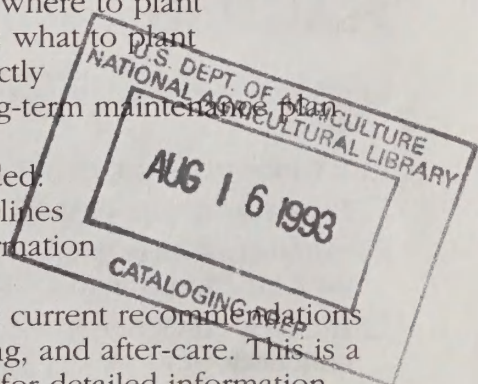
Other information included:

- Pruning Guidelines
- For More Information

Presented here are the current recommendations for tree selection, planting, and after-care. This is a guide on how to plant—for detailed information refer to sources listed at the end of the guide.

Take this booklet with you as you select a site and the correct tree for it. Mark as many boxes as necessary in each checklist. Use the center section when planting.

Let's help trees grow to be beautiful, healthy, and safe.





BEFORE YOU DIG!

**Laws
in most states
require you
to contact utilities.**

**Most have a central
toll free number.**

**If you damage any
underground utilities
you are financially
liable. See references.**



CHECKLIST 3

USEFUL TOOLS

- ☐ Large Spades or Shovels
- ☐ Large Tarp to Hold Soil
- ☐ Heavy Duty Wire Clippers
- ☐ Small Pruning Saw
- ☐ Hammer or Mallet
- ☐ Measuring Stick
- ☐ Pruning Shears
- ☐ Heavy Duty Scissors
- ☐ Gloves
- ☐ Stakes and Strapping

CHECKLIST 4

PREPARING A SITE

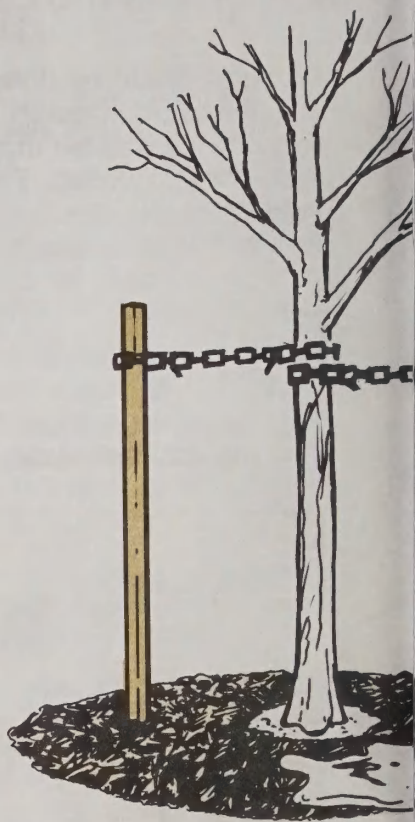
If possible, prepare the site before you bring in the tree. Keep the root ball well watered and keep the tree in a shaded place until you are ready to plant.

- ☐ Measure the height and diameter of rootball.
- ☐ Dig to the depth of rootball. Leave bottom of space firm.
- ☐ Dig the space at least 3 times the diameter of rootball.
- ☐ Break up compacted soil. Sides of planting space should not be packed.
- ☐ Do not amend soil unless planting in building rubble, poor, or severely disturbed soils.



CHECKLIST 5 PLANTING

- ☐ Lift tree into planting space by rootball, not the trunk.
- ☐ Balance tree upright in center of planting space.
- ☐ For trees in wire baskets, cut and remove wire.
- ☐ Cut away strings and burlap or plastic, exposing rootball. Do not remove soil from rootball.
- ☐ If tree is container grown, cut and remove container.
- ☐ Prune dead or crushed roots and straighten or cut circling roots. Make clean cuts.
- ☐ Begin refilling with soil, watering as you fill to firmly set tree. Gently tamp.
- ☐ Never plant too deep. Fill soil up to tree base just above where roots begin to branch.
- ☐ Prune only dead or injured branches. Do not paint wounds.



- ☐ Remove tree wrap, tape, or string on trunk. Trunks should be wrapped only to protect them in transit to planting site.
- ☐ Stake and brace most trees at planting time. Support tree but allow it to move or sway.
- ☐ Use wide, belt-like strapping attached to two sturdy stakes. Do not use rope or wire through a hose.
- ☐ Mulch lightly with about 2-3" of composted material at least to the diameter of crown of tree. Leave 3" circle of bare soil around the trunk. Deep layers of mulch can be harmful.
- ☐ Do not plant flowers under tree.
- ☐ Do not fertilize at planting time.

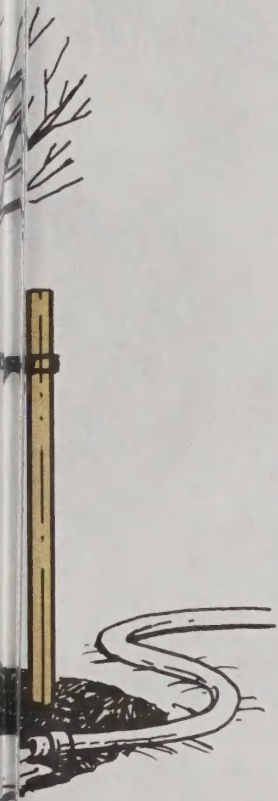


**Plan in advance
to protect established trees
on new construction sites.**

**Fence off wide areas
around the trees
to protect roots and
avoid compacted soil.**

**Don't allow equipment
or materials to be stored
near the trees.**

**Don't change grade levels
or cut tree roots
when excavating.**



CHECKLIST 6 **AFTER-CARE**

- ☐ Water is the critical factor for tree survival after planting. Deep water regularly throughout first growing season. Allow water to run slowly, soaking the soil, once or twice a week. Do not over water.
- ☐ Keep lawn mowers and string trimmers away from tree to avoid wounding trunk.
- ☐ Reduce herbicide use near tree and in surrounding lawn.
- ☐ Never fertilize stressed trees. Fertilizer is not tree food. It should be applied only after first year if required.
- ☐ Start an annual tree inspection program while tree is young to head off problems early.
- ☐ Replace mulch as needed. Keep grass and weeds out of mulched area. They compete for the same water and elements as tree.
- ☐ Remove stakes and strapping after one year unless site is extremely windy. Do not stake longer than 2 years.
- ☐ Prune dead or injured branches immediately.
- ☐ Prune while young to maintain size and shape beginning in the second growing season.
- ☐ Do not top trees to reduce height.
- ☐ Call an insured tree care professional for advice on large pruning jobs, hazard trees, and insect or disease problems. Non-professionals should never prune near utility wires.
- ☐ Do not plant flowers under a tree. Do not cultivate soil under the tree.
- ☐ Continue deep watering for 5 years after planting.

- If you plan to plant near the street or in a parking lot, know the snow removal plans.
- Do not plant trees that produce nuts or large fruit in pedestrian areas.
- Think of clustering trees in a park setting or a parking lot rather than planting single trees or rows of trees. Groupings create their own small environments and may survive better.

CHECKLIST 2

TREE SELECTION

WHICH SPECIES?

Show Checklist 1 to the nursery or garden center professional and request a choice of trees appropriate for your site. Ask if the nursery or garden center guarantees its plant material. Note responses in given spaces.

- ☐ What is tree's mature height?
- ☐ What is tree's mature shape?
- ☐ Is it cold hardy for your area?
- ☐ What are its soil requirements?
- ☐ Does it require a shady or sunny site?
- ☐ Does it require wet or dry site?
- ☐ Is it sensitive to salt?
- ☐ Describe flowers and fruits.
- ☐ What is the autumn/spring color?
- ☐ Is the species unusually susceptible to certain insects or disease, or to storm damage?
- ☐ In a community setting be sure to choose a variety of species. Do not plant large numbers of the same species.

NOTE SPECIES YOU CHOOSE:

Choice 1 _____

Choice 2 _____

WHICH PARTICULAR TREE?

Now carefully inspect the trees to choose the healthiest ones with the best form.

- ☐ Look for a straight, single stem. No double stems or multiple bunches of stems.
- ☐ Check for severe pruning cuts. See Pruning Guide.
- ☐ Inspect for dead bark, cankers, or signs of disease or insects on trunk or branches.
- ☐ No paint on wounds or pruning cuts.
- ☐ Don't select trees with tight, vertical branches where bark is squeezed between two branches or between trunk and branch.
- ☐ If it will be a street tree, branches should be high enough for pedestrians to walk beneath.

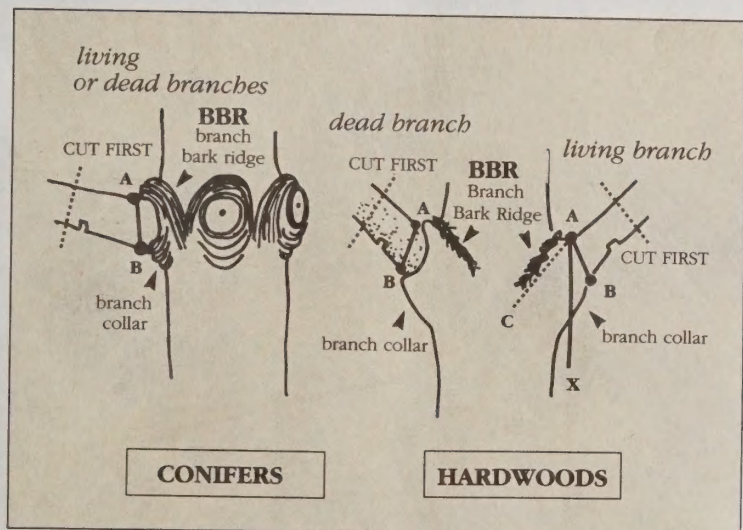


**For commercial/municipal contracts,
specify that plant material meets
American Standard for Nursery Stock .**

PRUNING GUIDELINES

Pruning should be done with a purpose and not as an automatic routine. Remove dead and injured branches and those that are crossing and in contact with other branches. Pruning to maintain size must start when the tree is young. You cannot cut a 50 foot tree back into a 30 foot tree in any way that is healthy and safe for the tree. Good pruning doesn't show.

Prune with particular care. Proper pruning cuts may make the difference between a tree having a long, healthy life or a short life. There is no mystery to pruning and once learned it becomes second nature.



1. Locate branch bark ridge (BBR).
2. Find target A—outside BBR.
3. Find target B—where branch meets collar.
4. If target B can not be found, drop an imaginary line at AX. Angle AXC equals XAB.
5. Cut a notch under the branch about 1/4-1/3 through to prevent tearing the bark.
6. Cut the branch, leaving a long stub, then
7. Make final cut at line AB (with care, power saws may make final cuts on the upstroke.)

DO NOT

- make flush cuts behind BBR.
- leave stubs, living or dead.
- injure or remove the branch collar.
- paint cuts.

The best time to prune living branches is in late dormant season or very early spring before leaves begin to open. Dead and injured branches can be pruned anytime. Use sharp tools. Make clean cuts. Use equipment safely. Never prune near utility wires. Call insured professionals for work near wires, for hazardous trees, or for pruning larger trees.



DO NOT TOP TREES.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TREE CARE

American Association of Nurserymen. 1990. **American Standard for Nursery Stock 1990.** 111 N. Canal Street, Suite 545, Chicago, IL 60606-7276.

American Forestry Association. 1990. **Global Releaf: Plant Trees.** P.O.Box 2000, Washington, DC, 20013.

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American National Standards Institute, Inc. 1988. **American National Standard for Tree Care Operations—Safety Requirements.** ANSI-Z 133.1-1988. 11 W. 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036.

Dirr, M.A. 1990. **Manual of Woody Landscape Plants: Their Identification, Ornamental Characteristics, Culture, Propagation, and Uses.** Stipes Publishing Co., Champaign, IL, 1007 pp.

Governor's Task Force on Community Trees in New Hampshire. 1990. **Caring for Young Trees from Nurseries to Landscapes.** State of New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, Division of Forests and Lands, P.O.Box 856, Concord, NH, 03302-0856.

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Lipkis, A. and K. 1990. **The Simple Act of Planting a Tree.** Tarcher, Los Angeles, CA 237 pp.

Shigo, A.L. 1991. **Modern Arboriculture.** Shigo and Trees, Associates, 4 Denbow Road, Durham, NH, 03824-3105. 424 pp.

Shigo, A.L. 1991. **5 Minute Tree Care. 5 Ways to Avoid Wasting Money.** Shigo and Trees, Associates, 4 Denbow Road, Durham, NH 03824-3105.



DIG SAFE

For toll free local information for all states call:
1-816-472-6000 Extension 537

In NH, RI, ME, and VT call:
1-800-225-4977

In MA: 1-800-322-4844

In CT: 1-800-922-4455

In NY: 1-800-962-7962

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